ISSN 0703-8763

Edmonton Area Series Report No. 35

COPING WITH CRIME:
A REPLICATION FOR WOMEN AND MEN

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The 1983 Edmonton Area Study (EAS) was administered and supported by the Population Research Laboratory and the Department of Sociology at The University of Alberta. Dr. L.W. Kennedy was the study director and principal investigator.

October 1984

ABSTRACT

This study extends analysis done by Riger, Gordon, and LeBailly (1980) of coping strategies for women. Our analysis includes a comparison of women with men using a cross-sectional sample. The results of this study are similar to those of the Riger study in terms of the types of isolation behavior that people adopt. We do not reproduce the Riger findings for street behavior. Most importantly, the significance of fear in predicting both types of coping behavior differs from men to women. The implications that these findings have for the development of crime prevention strategies to meet the different needs of these two groups are discussed.

The fear of crime has become a widespread social problem which has received increased attention in the criminological literature in the last few years. Studies have explored a variety of factors which relate to fear. These include differences among age groups (Lebowitz, 1975; Markson and Hess, 1980; and Kennedy and Silverman, forthcoming); education and socio-economic status (Clemente and Kleiman, 1976); environment and location (Lee, 1982; Conklin, 1975; Skogan and Maxfield,1980; and Hartnagel, 1979); and victimization (Garafolo, 1979).

The most pervasive finding in this literature is that men and women differ in their fear response to crime. These differences have been demonstrated in many countries (e.g. U.S., Baumer, 1978, Toseland, 1982; Britain, Clarke and Lewis, 1982; Canada, Kennedy and Krahn, 1984; and Australia, Braithwaite et al., 1982). It is interesting that in virtually all of the studies fear levels are found to be higher in women, despite the fact that they are less likely to be victimized than are men (Lampe, 1982).

There are various explanations for the relationship between victimization and fear for women but the most persuasive is that they perceive that they are less able to protect themselves should they encounter a threatening situation. This leads them to fear for their safety to a greater extent than do men (Lee, 1982:294). This fear derives, as well, from the nature of the threat that women perceive. This threat appears to originate most directly from fear of being a victim of rape or other sexual assault. Sexual crimes are not only violent but they also include the potential for psychological damage to the victims. As Riger (1981) explains it, women who are victimized, especially by rape, are blamed for that victimization. This blame then acts as a cautionary warning to other women (62). It also serves to restrict women's movement. An outcome of the fear/safety concern, then, is that women become victims of their fear, living like prisoners in their own homes (Braungart et al., 1980). If women do venture out on the streets, they are likely to be more cautious than men.

Riger, Gordon, and LeBailly (1982) examine the problem of coping with crime for women in a study conducted in 1977 in Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. In their analysis, the researchers investigate the determinants of the strategies used by women to protect themselves from harm. It is our intention in this paper to review the results reported by Riger et al. and then to replicate their study with data collected from a mid-size Western Canadian city. Our effort involves first testing to see if a replication of the Riger et al. findings is possible in a different setting. Second, we propose to expand on their analysis by comparing responses of men and women in this study as Riger et al. do not include

men in their analysis.[1] In addition, the Riger study does not use a representative sample of respondents from the cities surveyed while our study does. We will use the model derived from Riger et al. to broaden the test for the effects of urban life, including fear, on the perceived freedom that city residents experience.

Results from The Riger Study

Riger et al. argue that many things impinge on the self-protective behavior that people adopt in urban neighborhoods. These include psychological variables, life circumstances, and neighborhood conditions. It is the effects of these variables on coping behavior of women which is of most interest to the authors. In studying the dimensions of coping with urban crime for women, Riger et al. construct a scale of eight items which ask about self-protective behavior. This scale, which the authors treat as their dependent variable, asks respondents about the steps that they take to avoid situations which they see as threatening. In their analysis, Riger et al. find that the scale breaks down into two factors. One they call "isolation" and is relates to the steps that people take in avoiding crime. "It represents tactics designed to prevent crime by limiting exposure to risk, such as going out during the day"(375). The second factor, "street savvy" involves engaging in defensive tactics in the presence of danger. For example, when on the street, women may avoid eye contact with strangers.

Riger et al. report that psychological factors, in particular fear, explain the largest proportion of variation in isolation in women. In street savvy, neighborhood variables combine with psychological factors in explaining variation. Overall, fear is the best predictor of both types of coping (381).

Riger et al. report, as well, that perceptions of physical competence, race, and education are related to isolation, while perceptions of social disorder in the neighborhood combine with fear to predict the use of street savvy techniques. Neither crime rates nor residents' perception of risk of criminal victimization are related to either type of precautionary behavior. Riger et al. speculate that isolation behavior may be a function of attitudes towards oneself, while street behavior may be determined by attitudes towards the neighborhood environment.

As mentioned above, it is our intention to test for the effects of neighborhood conditions, psychological factors, and life circumstances as they influence ways of coping with crime. Do we find similar forms of coping for both men and women in a cross-sectional urban sample? What predictors

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[1]In an earlier paper, Gordon, Riger, LeBailly, and Heath (1980) compare the small number of men that they had in their sample to women. In the study that we propose to replicate, men were left out of the analysis all together.

influence coping in men versus women? Finally, how do men differ from women in these coping strategies?

The importance of this work rests with its attention to replication of work done in different urban environments, in addition to the insights that it provides concerning male versus female coping strategies. Our findings about how people deal with urban crime should help shape crime prevention strategies and provide insights for future research efforts.

Method

The Study

The data reported here were collected in the seventh annual Edmonton Area Study conducted by the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta in February, 1983. The questionnaire, administered to a cross-sectional sample of residents of the City of Edmonton, involved a one-hour structured interview. Recent municipal records were used to generate a simple random sample of 547 household addresses. In family households chosen, either the husband or wife was eligible for interviewing. In nonfamily households (i.e. any person or group of non-related persons occupying a dwelling) any member over 18 years of age was eligible. Because of the concern that women would be more likely to be home and thus would be oversampled, interviewers were instructed to obtain an equal number of male and female respondents by requesting to speak to a male in the first contact until a sufficient number was included. The final sex breakdown of the sample is 54% male and 46% female. The final sample size is 420 representing a 76.8% response rate.

The median age of the respondents is 33 years. Twenty-six percent of the respondents are single while 56% are married or living in a common-law relationship. Eighteen per cent are either divorced, separated or widowed. The median 1982 household income of the sample is in the $30,000-31,999 range. [3]

Measures

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[3] In comparing household size and age composition of the EAS samples to the 1981 census we find a dissimilarlity index of 5.9 and 9.3, respectively, indicating that we have a representative sample of the population as a whole (see Kinzel, 1983).

Riger et al. Replication

Figure 1 presents a comparative list of measures used by Riger et al. and those to be used in this study. As some questions are inappropriate when questioning males, there are some differences between the Riger measures and those that we use. An attempt has been made in all instances, however, to capture the intent of the measures used by Riger et al. in their study of women only.

The dependent variables measure women's coping behavior through a series of questions concerning avoidance and risk management. The Riger scale includes eight items. In our study, we drop the item, "When you are out alone, how often do you try not to dress in a provocative or sexy manner?". This question does not seem appropriate for men. An item that was added to the questionnaire, and which will be addressed separately in this study, is one that asks respondents, "How often do you walk on the other side of the street when you see a stranger walking towards you on the sidewalk?". This question deals with street behavior and is appropriate for both men and women. The questions are all coded in a fashion similar to that used by Riger et al., ranked on a scale from 1 (never uses this tactic) to 4 (always uses this tactic).

Riger et al. identify three sets of independent variables to be used in predicting variations in strategies for coping with crime. These are neighborhood conditions, psychological variables, and measures of life circumstances. The neighborhood condition variables include measures of official crime rates, neighborhood attachment, and local disorganization. Official assault and rape rates are computed from police data. Perceived risk of rape and purse-snatching are measured to assess residents' subjective estimates of the degree of local danger. In another paper, Riger, LeBailly, and Gordon (1981) report that victimization surveys are more accurate measures of the actual incidence of crime but police data more strongly influence most people's response to crime. Having reported this, Riger et al. (1982) find no effects of rates of crime on coping measures. Because of this, we have decided to revert to victimization as a more sensitive measure of the experience with crime than that provided by police rates. We use three variables of victimization asking respondents to state whether or not they themselves were a victim of crime in the previous year, whether or not they were a witness to crime in that time period, and whether or not they knew someone who was a victim.

The measures of community attachment used by Riger et al. include factors related to the individual's degree of bondedness and rootedness to the community. As shown in Figure 1, measures in our Bonded scale vary from Riger et al.'s variables but they substantively assess similar concepts. The Rooted scale varies only in the use of residential satisfaction instead of expectations of moving.

Figure 1: Comparison with Riger Measures

Riger Study	Edmonton Study
Precautionary Behavior	**Precautionary Behavior**
8 Item Scale	7 Item Scale - (See Table 1)
Neighborhood Conditions	**Neighborhood Conditions**
Official local assault and rape rates Perceived risk of rape	Victimization 1. were victim 2. witnessed a crime 3. knew of someone who was a victim
Community Attachment	Community Attachment
Bonded Scale 1. able to distinguish a stranger 2. felt part of the neighborhood 3. number of children known by name	Bonded Scale 1. neighborhood satisfaction 2. number of adults known by name 3. frequency of socializing with neighbors
Rooted Scale 1. number of years in residence 2. expectations of living there 2 years hence 3. own/rent	Rooted Scale 1. number of years in residence 2. residential satisfaction 3. own/rent
Local Disorganization	Incivility Scale (Skogen & Maxfield, 1981) 1. teens hanging out 2. abandoned buildings 3. use of drugs 4. vandalism
Psychological Variables	**Psychological Variables**
Fear of safety at night	Fear of safety at night
Perception of physical competence compared with men	Willingness to intervene in stopping a crime 1. breaking into neighbors' home 2. damaging neighbors' property 3. shoplifting in a store 4. beating up on the street
Locus of Control - Lefcourt (1976) 1. Is your own hard work more important for getting ahead than knowing the right people? 2. Does your success depend more on your own efforts than on luck or fate? 3. Is getting ahead for you mostly a matter of getting the right breaks? 4. For the most part, do you think that your success depends on the help of powerful people?	Mastery - Pearlin (1981) 1. I have little control over the things that happen to me. 2. There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have. 3. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life. 4. I often feel helpless in dealing with problems of life. 5. Sometimes I feel that I'm being pushed around in life. 6. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me. 7. I can do just about anything I set my mind to.
Life Circumstances	**Life Circumstances**
Age Race Education Income Marital Status Vocation	Age -- Education Income Marital Status Vocation

These two variables are closely related (Kennedy, 1984). The satisfaction measures in these scales seem an improvement on Riger et al.'s measures without affecting the intent of the concepts being measured.

Riger et al. do not specify the details of their measure of social disorder. However, we have assumed that they have used Skogan and Maxfield's (1980) Incivility Scale. This asks to what extent the following are problems in one's neighborhood: (1)teens hanging out; (2)abandoned buildings; (3)use of drugs; and (4)vandalism. These measures are rated on a seven-point scale ranging from (1)no problem to (7)very great problem.

The psychological variables used by Riger et al. include a measure of the fear of walking alone in one's neighborhood at night. We have used the same measure. Riger et al. use, as well, a measure of physical competence where women are asked to compare their strength and speed to the average man and woman. This scale seems inappropriate for use with the total sample. We have replaced it with a series of questions asking people to state whether they would intervene themselves or seek assistance in potentially dangerous situations. These situations include seeing an adult breaking into a neighbor's house or apartment; an adult damaging a neighbor's property; an adult shoplifting in a department store; and an adult beating someone up on the street. While these measures do not deal with the general problem of physical capabilities they do deal with the specific problem of how people judge their ability to physically handle threatening situations. Riger et al. find physical competence to be an important predictor of isolation. The specificity of this measure of intervention [1] in dangerous situations should both focus this issue and allow us to compare female and male responses equally.

Rather than use the locus of control measure used by Riger (Lefcourt,1976), we have chosen to use a more detailed mastery scale developed by Pearlin et al. (1980). Pearlin et al. claim that mastery refers to the extent to which people see themselves as being in control of the forces that importantly affect their lives (340). The seven item scale asks people to rate their agreement (1= strong disagreement; 7=strong agreement) on questions about themselves.

Finally, Riger et al. use a measure of respondents' attitudes towards women's roles. This is not a significant factor in their analysis and is deemed inappropriate for a mixed sample. As a result, we have ommitted this item.

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[1] A problem with using intervention, instead of physical competence, is that we may be picking up a slightly different dimension, that is, people's concern about not wanting to get hurt or become involved. The importance of these measures in assessing people's feelings about dealing directly with crime, however, seems to outweigh the possible confusion created by the other meanings attributed to them.

The final set of variables used by Riger et al. are referred to as measures of life circumstances. These include age, race, education, income, marital status, and vocation. We have used all of these variables with the exception of race which is not a salient factor in the social make-up of Western Canadian cities. While homogeneity of population on this dimension may remove one of the important factors related to certain types of street behavior we suggest that it is important to know that this behavior occurs in the absence of significant racial differences in the population.

Constructing the Measures for this Study

As indicated above, we have asked respondents (as have Riger et al.) to indicate how frequently they use common precautionary behaviors. We have analyzed, using factor analysis with a varimax rotation, seven of the eight items used by Riger et al. [4] As is the case with the Riger et al. analysis, these items separate into two factors accounting for 47% of the variance for males and 54% for females.

As can be seen in Table 1, the first factor for both men and women relates to what Riger, et al. call "isolation". The second factor appears similar to what Riger, et al. label as "street savvy"

Our second factor is not strong, however, although for both males and females, it explains approximately 15% of the variance, a figure that is comparable to that reported by Riger, et al. For males, "wearing shoes to run in" and "choosing a seat on the bus" are the only two items which load above .4. For females, only "choosing a seat on the bus" loads above .4.

As was done by Riger et al., we have created indices by adding the variables and then dividing by the total number of items so as to keep the indices on a 1-4 scale. Cronbach's alpha is computed to assess internal consistency for each scale. The alpha for isolation for males ($X=1.12$,S.D.$=.008$) is .722 and for females ($X=1.52$;S.D.$=.293$) is .802. For this index, we appear to have high internal consistency for both groups and we have retained the ability to replicate Riger et al.'s findings.

The alpha for street savvy for males ($X=1.65$;S.D.$=.114$) is .358 and for females ($X=1.94$;S.D.$=.172$) is .442. These low levels of internal consistency raise some question about the usefulness of this index in the analysis. Because of low confidence in this measure (and after testing the model for this index and finding little or no explanation coming from the predictors of coping) we have substituted a single measure for the street savvy index, "How often do you walk on the other side of the street when you see a stranger walking towards you on the sidewalk?". This question asks about one measure of street behavior and is, therefore, useful for our purposes.

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[4] The excluded item asks whether respondents avoided dressing sexily.

Victimization measures are used, as outlined above, to determine respondents' direct experience with crime. Our measure of perceived social disorder, Skogan and Maxfield's "Incivility Scale", has high internal consistency for both males (X=1.89; SD=.436; alpha=.783) and females (X=2.11; SD=.605; alpha=.706). The other neighborhood scales, with the exception of the Bonded scale for males, also display good internal consistency for males (Bonded : X=2.72; SD=.230; alpha=.461 ; Rooted : X=2.65; SD=2.54; alpha=.692) and females (Bonded : X=2.83; SD=.367; alpha=.703 ; Rooted : X=2.63; SD=2.37 ; alpha=.645).[5]

The psychological variables include fear and three measures of personal mastery which are the product of a factor analysis of the Pearlin, et al. scale. These factors are personal control (respondents indicating that they have little control over things, that there is no way they can solve their own problems, and that there is little they can do to change things); personal helplessness (respondents reporting that they feel helpless dealing with problems and that they feel pushed around in life); and personal competence (respondents saying that the future depends on them and that they can do anything that they set their minds to doing). These three indices have high internal consistency for males (control : X=2.49; SD=.002; alpha=.659 ; helplessness : X=2.36; SD=.100; alpha=.514 ; competence : X=2.25; SD=1.39; alpha=.671) and females (control: X=2.76; SD=.006; alpha=.720 ; helplessness : X=2.65; SD=.007; alpha=.592 ; competence : X=2.09; SD=.002; alpha=.679).

Findings

Isolation

Table 2 presents the correlations between the independent variables and our measures of coping with crime for both men and women. Table 3 presents reduced form multiple regression equations for the effects of the independent variables on the coping strategies for men and women. Table 3 provides information about both the slope (standardized regression coefficients, Betas) of predictors as compared to zero, as well, as the comparison of slopes (unstandardized regression coefficients, b) between men and women.

Within the set of psychological factors for men and women, fear is the strongest predictor of isolation behavior. Those who assess their neighborhoods as unsafe are more likely to isolate

[5]We will still use the Bonded scale for males in our analysis, as it is a predictor variable and provides completeness in our replication. However, we have to be careful of any conclusions drawn from our findings related to this measure because of its low internal consistency.

Table 1: Varimax Rotated Factor Matrix of Self-Protective Behavior Items

	Males		Females	
	Isolate	Savvy	Isolate	Savvy
How often do you try to wear shoes that are easy to run in, in case of danger?	.042	.416	.047	.242
When a salesman or repairman comes to your home, how often do you ask for identification before opening the door?	.074	.223	.282	.212
When you go to a movie or ride on a bus, how often do you choose a seat with an eye to who would be sitting nearby?	.185	.404	.128	.753
When you walk down the street, how often do you avoid looking at people you don't know in the eye?	.027	.293	.212	.366
How often do you restrict your going out to only during the daytime?	.787	.073	.599	.203
How often do you avoid doing shopping, errands, laundry, or other things you have to do because of fear for your safety?	.617	.336	.750	.187
How often do you not do things you want to do but don't have to do - like visiting somebody or going to the movies - because of fear for your safety?	.585	.095	.907	.109

themselves from danger (see Table 3). In comparing males and females, we find that this relationship is significantly stronger for females than for males. A second measure, the individual's willingness to intervene when someone is being beaten up on the street, is a statistically significant predictor for both males and females with the assessment that one would not intervene being associated with greater use of isolation. This pattern is the same for males and females. It replicates Riger, et al's findings concerning the importance of physical competence in promoting avoidance.

Further, we find that for females, the mastery scales related to psychological control and personal competence are associated with isolation. A sense of low control but high competence predicts isolation.

The demographic measures related to isolation for women are age and marital status. For men, the relationships with age and education are statistically significant. Older men are more likely to be isolated. For women, those who are married tend to isolate themselves while for men it is those with lower education who are isolates.

Predicting Street Behavior

As pointed out above, the scale used by Riger et al. to measure street savvy has low reliability, we have included a single dependent variable "how often do you walk on the other side of the street to avoid a stranger?". The most important psychological predictor of avoiding strangers for women is fear of crime. This finding is consistent with that reported by Riger et al. in their findings related to street savvy. However, we find that fear is not a significant factor in predicting stanger avoidance for men.

Unlike the findings reported by Riger et al. that social disorder in neighborhoods creates street savvy, we do not find comparable results for stranger avoidance. We do find, however, that for women, perceived helplessness relates to avoidance of strangers, while for males, lack of personal competence is a statistically significant predictor of this behavior. The other factor predicting stranger avoidance is their lack of willingness to intervene in preventing public damage.

Of the demographic variables, only marital status for women is a significant predictor of avoidance. Married women are more likely to engage in protective behavior on the street than are unmarried women. This is the only life circumstance variable which predicts this behavior. Riger et al. find that none of these variables act as predictors of their measure of street behavior.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients for Independent Variables with Isolation and Avoidance of Strangers by Gender

Independent Variable	Isolation		Avoid Strangers	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Neighborhood Conditions				
Incivility	-.073	.085	-.059	-.066
Rooted	.124	.006	-.022	.017
Bonded	-.014	-.102	.070	.026
Crime Victim	.138	.011	-.050	-.011
Witness to Crime	.019	.111	-.108	-.041
Rel/Friend Victim of Crime	.138	.005	-.155	.005
Psychological Factors				
Fear	.156	.481	-.112	-.133
Do if Beating	-.184	-.197	.076	.061
Do if Damage	-.115	-.151	-.094	.120
Control	.072	.194	-.078	-.110
Helplessness	.016	.080	-.103	-.182
Competence	.142	.037	-.163	.024
Life circumstances				
Age	.229	.162	-.050	.040
Education	-.202	-.083	.108	-.019
Income	-.121	-.108	.061	.063
Marital Status	.091	.036	-.019	-.088
Vocation	-.179	-.054	.137	-.056
N =	202	167	202	167

Table 3: Determinants of Two Measures of Coping with Crime: Reduced form Multiple Regression Equations+ by Gender

	Isolation		Avoid Strangers	
Independent Variable	Male	Female	Male	Female
Neighborhood Conditions				
Incivility (low = no problem; high = great problem)	-.008 (.014) [-.042]	---	.006 (.007) [.076]	.009 (.016) [.047]
Rooted (low to high)	----	-.065 (.074) [-.069]	-.004 (.021) [-.020]	-.011 (.047) [.022]
Bonded (low to high)	-.008 (.035) [-.016]	.024 (.076) [.023]	-.015 (.017) [-.068]	-.019 (.048) [-.033]
Crime Victim (yes = 0; no = 1)	.105 (.140) [.058]	-.042 (.274) [-.011]	.029 (.067) [.034]	---
Witness to Crime (yes = 0; no = 1)	-.082 (.170) [-.035]	.151 (.372) [.028]	.110 (.084) [.102]	.020 (.172) [.009]
Rel/Friend Victim of Crime (yes = 0; no = 1)	.054 (.118) [.035]	.288 (.232) [.087]	.069 (.056) [.096]	---
Psychological Factors				
Fear (1 = very unsafe; 5 = very safe)	.094* (.067) [.099]	.670** (.098)# [.490]	.022 (.032) [.050]	.091** (.064) [.123]
Do if Beating (intervene oneself = 1; other = 0)	-.168** (.111) [-.114]	-.661** (.302) [-.157]	-.042 (.053) [-.062]	-.158 (.192) [-.069]
Do if Damage (intervene oneself = 1; other = 0)	.083 (.112 [-.055]	-.231 (.316) [-.053]	.091* (.054) [.131]	.224 (.201) [.095]
Control (strongly disagree = high; strongly agree = low)	---	.107** (.044) [.207]	-.009 (.011) [-.078]	.012 (.028) [.041]

Table 3, continued...

Helplessness (strongly disagree = high; strongly agree = low)	-.026 (.032) [-.061]	-.058 (.065) [-.075]	.011 (.017) [.057]	.072** (.042) [.0170]
Competence (strongly agree = high; strongly disagree = low)	.038* (.028) [.109]	-.128** (.061) [-.151]	.024** (.014) [.147]	-.045 (.039) [-.100]
Life Circumstances				
Age (17-34 = 1; 35-44 = 2; 45-64 = 3; 65+ = 4)	.095** (.059) [.128]	.231** (.127) [.146]	.005 (.035) [.014]	-.032 (.081) [-.037]
Education (years - low to high)	-.074** (.018) [-.124]	---	-.009 (.008) [-.098]	.016 (.022) [.060]
Income (dollars - low to high)	-.008 (.008) [-.079]	-.024 (.020) [-.111]	.001 (.004) [-.012]	-.012 (.013) [-.100]
Marital Status (married = 1; not married = 0)	.025 (.111) [.017]	.647** (.263) [.205]	-.023 (.053) [-.034]	.272** (.165) [.160]
Vocation (employed = 1; unemployed = 0)	-.671 (.147) [-.037]	.142 (.233) [.044]	-.037 (.070) [-.044]	.127 (.152) [.072]
Constant	2.931	1.264	3.942	4.045
R^2	.15	.35	.10	.10

+ In each cell in this table, the first entry is the unstandardized regression coefficient (b), the second is the standard error of the coefficient (S.e.) and the third is the standardized regression coefficient (Beta).

* Regression coefficient is significantly different from zero ($p < .05$).

** Regression coefficient is significantly different from zero ($p < .01$).

The difference between regression coefficient for the same variable in the male and female equation is statistically significant ($p < .01$) using a two-tailed t-test employing $\frac{b_1 - b_2}{\sqrt{S.e._1^2 + S.e._2^2}}$ to calculate the standard error of differences between coefficients. (Adapted from Pfeffer, et.al., 1982).

Summary and Conclusions

The results of this study provide some interesting comparisons with the Riger et al. research, as well as, some extensions of their findings. First, we find that coping strategies among our respondents are similar to those identified in the Riger study in the case of isolation but not street savvy. This pattern of replication may be a function of the nature of the measures used. Riger et al. state that isolation tends to be person specific while street savvy is environmentally based. If they are correct then the general pattern of isolation is more likely to occur in different environments than would street savvy. What is interesting is that in spite of the fact that our study site has a relatively low crime rate compared to Riger's sites, the findings for isolation hold.

For women, we find similar findings to Riger et al. with regard to the importance of psychological variables, including fear and physical competence, in predicting isolation. We find, as well, some evidence of psychological mastery influencing this form of coping. While, Riger et al. do not report this finding, they do emphasize the importance not only of physical competence but also assertiveness and self-confidence in determining safety precautions. "Socialization processes that link feminity to weakness and helplessness may encourage the existence of fear in women and use of safety precautions which are limiting"(383). Our data offer support for this notion. Further, we have evidence that women differ from men in the effects that fear has on coping. This finding further reinforces the view that women are different from men in their psychological orientation towards dangers in their environment, probably because they fear different things. These differences appear to attach to gender. They are neither related to any other significant life circumstance factors which explain coping nor are they related to significant variations in neighborhood conditions.

In terms of street savvy, while we did not replicate the Riger, et al. index, we do find that fear is again a major predictor of this form of coping for females. Interestingly enough, this is not a significantly different pattern from that reported by men, even though for them fear does not change street behavior. We find, further, that psychological variables relating to self-confidence, rather than neighborhood conditions, predict street behavior in our sample. As indicated above, this finding may be a function of the nature of the study sites and variations in coping strategies that we might predict when applying these results beyond large scale metropolitan centres.

In summary, we have surprisingly good replication of findings for isolation given the differences in sampling, urban environments, and even national influences. The cross-cultural differences in coping that have been revealed offer reinforcement of Riger et al.'s findings. The

differences between males and females in the effects of fear provides a further point of contrast and it is this comparison which deserves much more careful research. One line of inquiry should address the importance of socialization in creating coping responses. In addition, crime prevention research must come to grips with the fact that different strategies may be necessary for men and women given the varying styles of coping revealed above. Where major contributions can be made is in identifying the contingencies under which this coping behavior takes place. For example, one may argue that people who are fearful go out at night anyway while recognizing that they may have to confront someone committing a crime. What is needed to draw these types of conclusions is further analysis which allows us to determine the conditions under which people will adapt certain coping behavior. This paper should be seen as a first step towards determining those circumstances.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Jim Hackler, Tim Hartnagel and Harvey Krahn for thier helpful comments on ealier drafts of this paper.

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